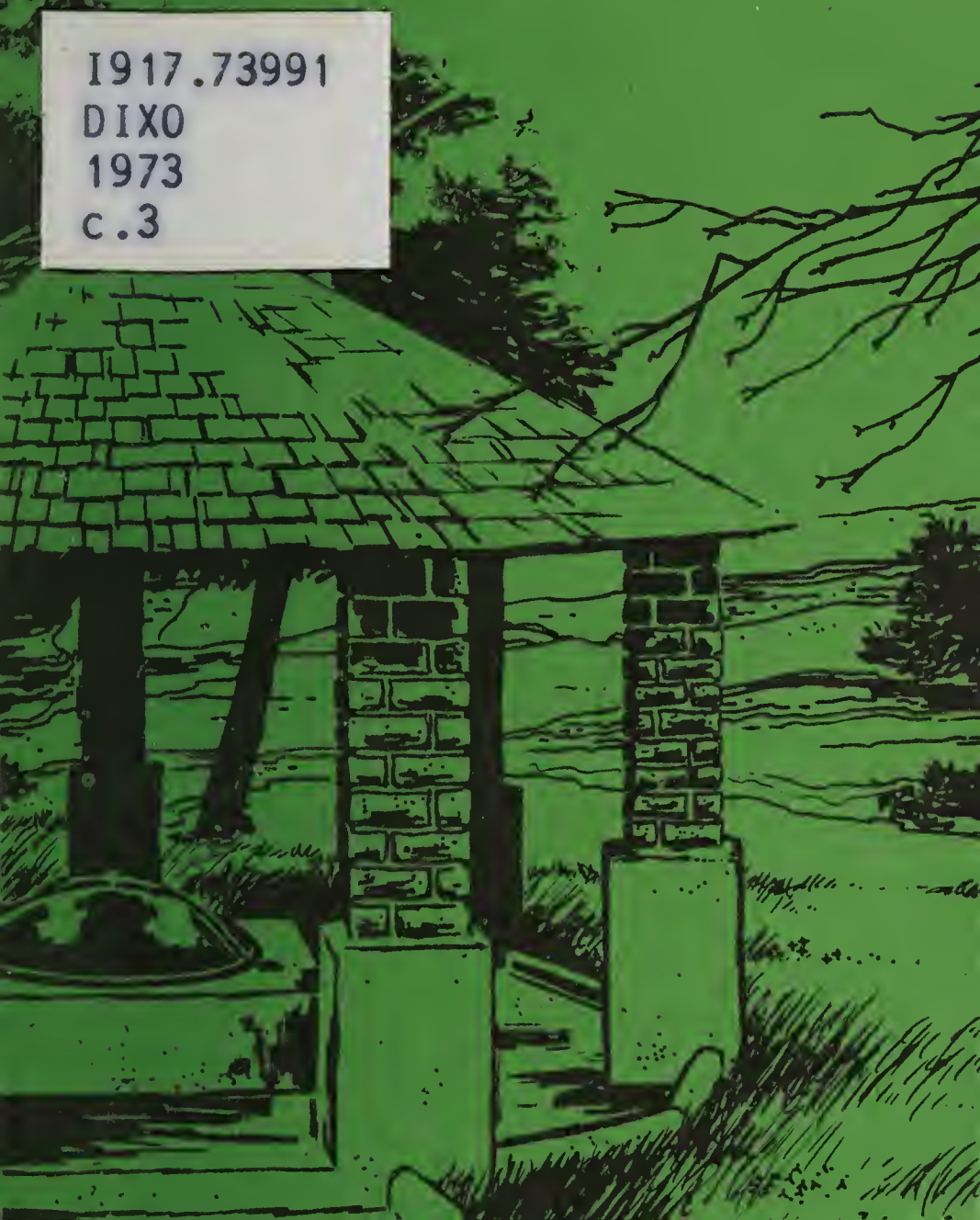


dixon springs

STATE PARK

4542713
13517411

1917.73991
DIXO
1973
c.3



2917.13991
DIXON
1943
C. 3

THE PARK

Dixon Springs State Park, in the Shawnee National Forest, is one of three state parks in the Illinois extension of the Ozark Mountains. The park is on a giant block of rock which was dropped 200 feet along a fault line that extends northwesterly across Pope County.

The 496-acre park is about 10 miles west of Golconda on Route 146 near its junction with Route 145. The first land acquisition in 1946 was the beginning of a program of extension improvements and further land purchases for Dixon Springs State Park.

HISTORY

The area around the park was occupied by various tribes of Algonquins who, after the Shawnee had been driven from Tennessee, had settled near the mouth of the Wabash River. Dixon Springs was one of their favorite camping grounds and was called "Kitche-mus-ke-nee-be" or the Great Medicine Waters.

One of the better known Indian trails, which the early French called the "Grand Trace" passed to the west of the park and south to Fort Massac, branching out into lesser trails. Much of the "Grand Trace" is Route 145, one of the most scenic highways in the state, running nearly all of its length south from Harrisburg through the Shawnee National Forest.

This section of the state was part of the Old Soldiers' Reservation occupied for a time by about 6,000 Indians. Like the buffalo, most of the Indians were gone by the early 1830's.

Named For Pioneer: Dixon Springs takes its name from William Dixon, one of the first white men to build a home in this section, who obtained a school land warrant in 1848 from Governor Augustus C. French. His cabin was a landmark for many years as was an old log church on the adjoining knoll.

A small community grew up at Dixon Springs with a general store, post office, blacksmith shop, grist mill and several churches. The grist mill disappeared, but the other buildings continue to be used.



Dixon Springs became a nineteenth century health spa which attracted hundreds to the seven springs of mineral-enriched water. A bathhouse provided mineral or soft water baths, hot or cold, available at any time. The natural beauty of the area and its interesting stone formations, which helped to give the park valley a more equable temperature in the summer than most of southern Illinois, made the resort so popular that steamboat excursions were run from as far away as Paducah, Ky., Evansville, Ind., and Cairo to Golconda, then by train to within a couple of miles of the park.

THE NATURAL SCENE

The entire county is hilly and during rainy weather rivulets cascade down the hills in the park forming waterfalls of varying size and height.

Bold cliffs and crags overhang a bubbling brook while large boulders overgrown with ferns, ivy, lichens and moss fringe the hillside. Giant century-old trees interlock above the small creek as

cliffs rise on either side and huge boulders are scattered through the valley.

Equally intriguing are the names given numerous points of interest, including Album Rock, Red Man's Retreat, Wolf Pen, Lover's Leap, Ghost Dance, Pluto's Cave, Alligator Rock, The Chain of Rocks, Devil's Workshop and Honey Comb Rock. The principal canyon has walls nearly 60 feet high with a long narrow passageway.

Deer, squirrel, rabbit, groundhog and fox scamper around the oak, cypress, gum, pine, sycamore, walnut, persimmon, hickory, birch and maple trees. Dogwood and catalpa trees blossom profusely in season. In the spring the Jack-in-the-pulpit, violet, lady's slipper, mayapple and sweet william brighten the natural beauty.

An open forest a short distance north of the park was used by General John A. Logan as a meeting place when he organized a company of soldiers to serve in the Union army. All the natural beauty abounding here possibly influenced the decision to hold the first 4-H Club camp in the United States at Dixon Springs.



FACILITIES . . .

Picnicking: Picnic tables and outdoor stoves are available at two shaded picnic areas each with a playground and parking area. Drinking water is available.

Swimming Pool: A modern swimming pool provides swimmers with lifeguard protection as well as bathhouse facilities. Towering oaks, elms and birch trees shade the pool built in 1957.

Concession Stand: Located near the swimming pool, the visitor will find a variety of refreshments.

Trails: There is a nature trail marked for over a mile in the park.

Camping: There is a tent and trailer camping area with limited electricity and flush and pit toilets. Contact the ranger for a permit. A youth group camping area is also available; groups of over 25 persons need advance permission to enter the park.

Baseball: A baseball diamond is used extensively by park visitors.

For more details about this site, contact Ranger, R. R. #1, Brownfield, Illinois 62911, phone 618/949-3394. For information on other Illinois sites, write the Department of Conservation, Information/Education Section, State Office Building, Springfield, 62706.



Park Map

Printed by authority of the State of Illinois
Issued by

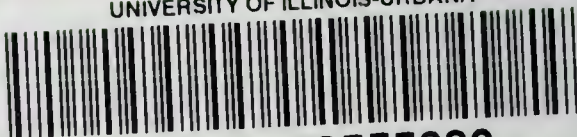
DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION

Division of Parks and Memorials

50M-10-73



UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS-URBANA



3 0112 122555680